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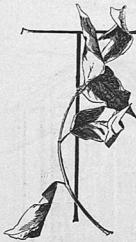
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# THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

## ARTISTIC IRON WORK.

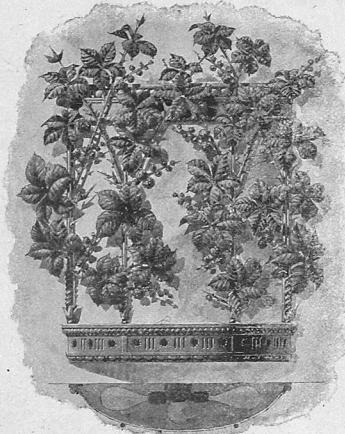
BY W. H. ECKMAN.



THE blacksmith is of great antiquity, as it is of record that Tubal-Cain, the fifth remove from Adam, was "an instructor of all the artificers in brass and iron," but aside from an incidental reference to a bedstead of iron, made for Og, the giant king of Bashan, and chariots of iron possessed by the Canaanites, sacred history gives no assurance that the smith was an artist. Profane history is quite as silent, and affords but scant evidence that the Hellenic Greek hammered the ductile metal into pleasing forms.

There were armorers in the north countries who wrought weapons of marvelous beauty ere Rome entered upon universal conquest, but the Art Blacksmith, as we know him, did not appear upon the scene until the twelfth century of our Christian era. It was in France and in Germany that he thrived best, developing the art to its seeming highest perfection, exhausting conventional and natural forms in enriching and beautifying his work.

Art found but a precarious foothold in the Western continent while the young nations were struggling with utilitarian problems, and the art of the blacksmith was among the last to plant itself; less than a quarter of a century ago fugitive pieces here and there, the product of some modest forge, alone attested its presence; now there are vast workshops where scores of skilled artisans devote themselves wholly to art metal work, and the American artist-blacksmith has become the recognized peer of the best in the world, his modern achievement surpassing the work of the "old masters," and the development of his art has been more rapid than that of any of the industrial arts in the country. Of the monumental structures dedicated to commerce, which have sprung up all over the land within the period, none are without a full complement of "ornamental iron," in the form of elevator inclosures and cars, entrance gates, stairways, grilles, railings, and elevators.



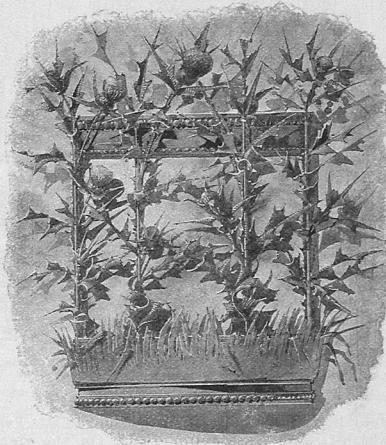
WALL ELECTROLIER IN HAMMERED IRON.

Of the establishments in which this class of work is produced that of the Winslow Bros., in Chicago, is the largest and most important, employing from 700 to 800 designers, draughtsmen and skilled artisans, the entire plant being devoted to art metal work.

The artist-blacksmith has not confined himself entirely to the elements which enter into and become a part of palatial buildings, but, as our illustrations will show, he has created things beautiful for the home, and upon them he has lavished the best fruits of his knowledge, his genius and his skill. Be-

sides the decorative kettle stand and wall electroliers shown in the cuts, there are dinner bells, pendant upon brackets of exquisite designs, with interwoven leaves, vines and flowers; lamp stands, delicately-wrought grilles upon which to suspend portière draperies; fire screens with rich metallic lace framed in iron; fire dogs of unique pattern. These are all wrought by hand at the anvil; each flower, leaf and sprig is shaped under the hammer from solid metal and welded, not bolted, to please. The wall electroliers are highly decorative pieces of wrought iron, hammered leaf-work, and treated by the Bower-Barff process. They are elliptical in form, constructed to fit against the wall, inclosing a group of incandescent lamps. With opalescent glass in the framework, a very soft and charming effect is secured. The electroliers measure about 30 by 26 inches, and will accommodate three globes each.

Delicately modeled and gracefully grouped this beautiful work is fragile only in appearance. This work is not to be mistaken



WALL ELECTROLIER IN HAMMERED IRON.

for that known as "Venetian iron work," such as the ladies are invited to produce with leaves and flowers in sheet-iron, ready-shaped and for sale in assorted packages to suit. Swedish iron and American low-grade steel is used, and the designs are in every instance original, no stock patterns being allowable.

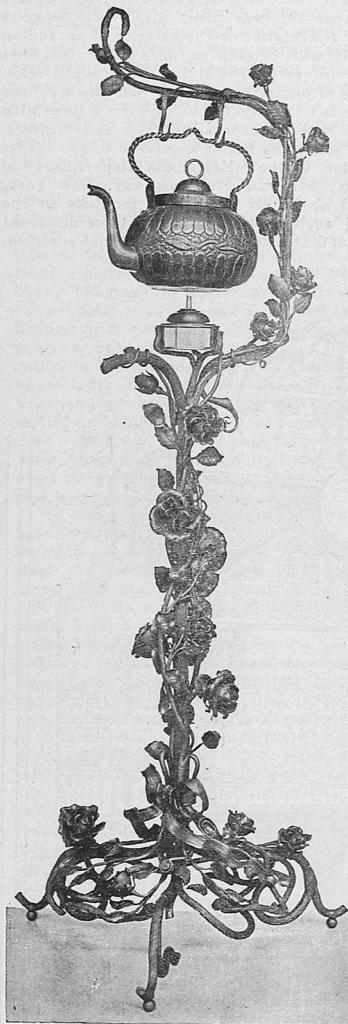
The dark, repellent appearance of the somber metal and its liability to rust has ever been an objection to the use of iron, especially in the suggested forms; paint is not satisfying, inasmuch as its application to the surface wholly destroys the identity of the metal; but when treated by what is known as the Bower-Barff process—a purely chemical process—the surface is coated with an enamel of oxide, an element of the metal itself, of a most beautiful texture, soft and velvety in appearance. The process not only imparts a fine finish but renders the iron rustless, and thus "the cup which cheers but does not inebriate" may be brewed in the kettle swung from its dainty pedestal, and the flowers may be sprinkled in the vase with no fear of a truant drop leaving its mark of rust on either.

## A HENRY IRVING DRESS PARADE.

**T**O speak of the chiffons of "Henry VIII," as presented by Mr. Irving's company in Abbey's Theater, includes much more than the gowns of the women who perform in it. The wardrobes of the supernumeraries even, the pages, the pur-servants, and the macebearers, the guards, trumpeters, and henchmen, are formidable affairs. As for King Hal himself, though there are more yards in his Queen's gowns, there are not more fashions and fancies in them than in his own fur-trimmed and silk-lined pelisses and paletots, or whatever his regal wear may be called. Those were the days when men wore laces and velvets, brocades and satins; all that the poor women

could do for greater finery was to add to the amount of the material. The quality and variety remained the same, even to the jewels.

Thus it happens that the presentment of this royal history is a splendid dress parade, in which the noble Lord Cardinal is a vivid figure in his robes of solid, blazing scarlet. And it may be said in passing that Mr. Irving throws much expression in the management of his flowing gown, which, as it must at times be wound about him, is of difficult texture, being soft and limp.



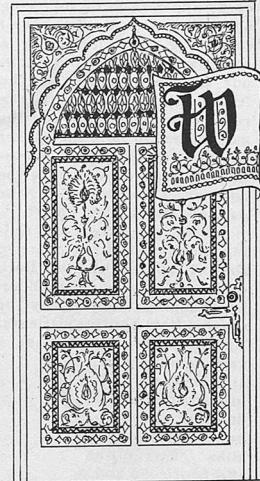
TEA KETTLE STAND IN WROUGHT IRON.

a hold, and the long sinuous train seems almost a thing of life creeping after her. These savagely royal accoutrements do not suit Miss Terry; she seems conscious of their weight and volume, and they fret her. The folds of soft silk and light brocade which swathe her in Queen Katharine's dying moments are much less trying and more becoming.

The dress of the coronation fete defies description. It is a stage pageant such as is rarely seen. Every color known to art and nature adorns a vision revel that leaves a composite picture of glitter and magnificence difficult to individualize.

#### AN ORIENTAL DEN IN THE INDIAN STYLE.

BY F. SCHUYLER MATTHEWS.



HAT is distinctively Indian in style of ornament must not be confused with what is purely Hindoo. The most beautiful art work existing in Hindostan to-day was directly received from Arabia. The Moresque Alhambra is similar in the details of its ornament to the Taj-Mahal in Agra. But Moresque ornament is not Indian, nor is there in either style anything which is similar to what he called Hindoo.

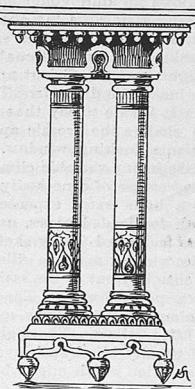
But granting that a fusion of Moresque with Indian and Hindoo ornaments the Indian art, which one may find anywhere in Hindostan to-day, it is quite consistent to design a little room which may be called "Den," with certain elements taken from all three styles.

The doorway may be treated in several ways, some of which might be quite elaborate, but my sketch shows something simple and easy of construction. The scalloped arch can be made of three thicknesses of 7x8-inch pine-painted ad libitum. The edge should be finished with a bit of bead moulding. It would seem consistent to have a special door made which might take the place of the old one, but this is not essential; and my sketch shows how an old door may be treated.

The floor of the den might be depressed eight inches below the level of the hall, if the house is in process of construction, or, it might be eight inches above the hall level if the house is already built; a difference one way or another is decidedly necessary if one wishes to make a pronounced departure in the direction of orientalism. Of course the floor ought to be covered with a rug or two, Indian in pattern if possible, but certainly harmonious with the color tone of the little room—that is essential.

As for the walls and ceiling, I certainly should not cover them with wall-paper, unless something distinctively Oriental and handsome could be obtained for a reasonable sum. There are other and better ways of treating the walls; because, if expense is to be taken into consideration, and one has the ability to perform a little artistic work themselves, such work, if expended on the walls and ceiling, will prove better than wall-paper.

I would suggest that a simple color scheme should be adopted for the room, comprising dull golden yellow, black, white, a little Venetian red, and a smaller amount of dull olive green. These colors should apply to all fittings without exception; for instance, furniture might be ebonized; cotton draperies of Indian manufacture may be used, having precisely the colors I mention; on the walls yellow and black might predominate, on the ceiling, white, yellow, and a little red and gold. Gold should be used sparingly but with telling effect, and as a rule blue should be entirely excluded from everything. There is not space enough here to describe or even to suggest any of the infinite numbers of patterns which one with artistic instincts might easily apply by stencils to wall and ceiling. Such patterns may



INDIAN TABLE.